

Butcher's Tale

NARRATIVE

OF THE MURDER OF

William Butler,

Executed, September 10th, 1840,  
At Chatham, about the Murder of

Capt. WADSWORTH

WHICH WAS THE SUBJECT OF A

SERMON

PREACHED BY

MR. L. B. SWEET

AT CHATHAM, N. Y.

NEW-YORK, J. C. B. & P. B. B. & P. B. B.



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Boteler's

CASE: &C.

**T** Hou art here Christian Reader Presented with a Candid and Impartial Relation of a deplorable Tragedy, which yet the good Hand of Providence, that

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Sometimes through seeming severities *Waits to be Gracious*, and calls Sinners by Inscrutable Methods even at the *Eleventh Hour*, was pleased at last to Crown with a Blessed Catastrophe, though waded unto through *Waters of Marah*, and frightful streights of an Ignominious Temporal Death.

The Design of this Publication is far from casting the least Reflections or murmuring Surmises on the Judicial Proceedings, owned by the *Deceased* to be Just and Legal; Nor is it out of any over-bias'd fondness to his Memory. For, alas! *The Dead have no flatterers*, and he is now (we hope) in Glorious Rest, regardless either of Detraction or Applause, as much beyond the Good Offices of Friends, as Malice of Enemies.

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There



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There are far more Worthy Reasons and Useful Motives, that seem not less to Necessitate, than Invite the Divulging of these Papers. As

First for the Discovery of Truth, and Checking those swarms of Different, yet equally false Reports every where spread concerning this unhappy Accident: The Quality of the Gentleman slain engaged a General pity, and some ungrateful Circumstances, a just and more than ordinary Detestation against it's Authour; whence busie fame snatching up some partial Rumours Composed of Dark Probabilities, and many real Mistakes, aggravated it to that hideous proportion; that not onely the Credulous Vulgar (who are neither able nor willing to Examine things to the Bottom, or Distinguish aright) became Prepossessed;

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Prepossessed ; but likewise some more Intelligent, seem'd carried along with the Impetuous Torrent, and to *Disabuse* such from undue Impressions is but *Justice* to the Dead, and *Charity* to the Living : Let Malefactors suffer according to their Demerits, yet still 'tis below the Generosity of a Gentleman, and the Dignity of a Christian, to *Blacken* any Man's memory with *Feigned* crimes, and groundless Imputations : He that does not *Detect* Calumnies when he can, is tacitely guilty of them, and those that scatter *Slaunders* on anothers Tomb, deserve to have their own Monuments sullied with Ignominy.

2. A yet greater and most Important Inducement, is to promote Gods Glory by Proclaiming the Infiniteness of his Love, the Riches of his Grace, and Miraculousness of his power in working good out of evil, making

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ing Destruction Instrumental to Conversion : Sanctifying Affliction, bringing a Wretched Soul to a sense of his misery : and (as Charity obliges us to hope) to a hearty sincere Repentance not to be Repented of ; If the Blessed Spirits of Just Men made perfect, and Holy Angels in Heaven rejoyce at the Conversion of a Sinner ; ought not Mortals on Earth to Remarque it, by magnifying the Mercies of so good a God, and publishing his Wondrous Works, that the present and succeeding Generations may Celebrate them with due Praises and Thanksgivings.

3. Nor can this certain and well-known Narrative but be highly useful (if rightly improved) to the Readers ; (especially such as were Master Boteler's Acquaintance) by way of Caution and Information ; You that were his Friends (and without reflection let me add, sometimes perhaps  
*Companions*

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*Companions* in Riot and Extravagance; would you *Meet* him again with Joy in Happiness; Imitate him then in his contrition and *Repentance*; You whose *Vicious* practises have first prevailed to make you *Wish* there were no future state of reward or Punishment, and further continuance in Sin so fear'd your consciences, stupefied your understandings, and degraded your Reason: As with the Fool in the Psalmist, *To say in your Hearts there is no God*: Here you may behold how Empty and Idle, how Pernicious and *Frightful*, how Loathsome and Detestable such conceits appear; when once *Serious Apprehensions* of Death Approach; Opening the self-blinded Eyes of the Soul, and taking off those *Vain* Imaginations, which the *Depravity* of Nature, the *Inconsiderateness* of Youth, the madness of *Wine*, or a *Proud Fantastick* Humour

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Humour of Singularity have Raised, and which tend no less to the Disturbance and *Distraction* of Humane Society in General; than to the particular Ruine and *Destruction*, (as well Temporal as Eternal,) of all those that suffer themselves to be *Infatuated* by them.

As for the *Truth* of what is here offer'd to publique view; Let me assure thee (Christian Reader!) That there is nothing contained, but what was either found in Mr. Boteler's own Hand-Writing, solemnly declared by him as therein mentioned, taken from his *Dying Lips*, or known matter of Fact; All ready to be *Attested* by Worthy Persons, *Ministers* Instrumental to his conversion, and attending him in his last Agonies, or others of approved *Integrity*: Nay so conscientiously scrupulous has the Collector been, that many *Remarkable Expressi-*



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ons, though well remembred in substance, (and which might much have Embelish'd these Memoirs) yet because not taken in the very Words they were delivered in, are wholly *Omitted*; His aim in this undertaking not being at any private *Lucr*e or *Interest*, but general Satisfaction and Edification. To which End, may his pains be Sanctified by the Divine Blessing, and Gratified by thy kind Acceptance, serious Perusal, and everlasting Advantage.

But we too long detain the greedy Reader from matter of Fact, to which we now proceed.

**Master**

*Boteler's Case.*

**M**After *William Boteler* was born  
in *Northampton-shire*, about  
the Year 1650. Descended of an An-  
cient Family, and in his Youth Libe-  
rally Educated in Litterature and Ex-  
ercises, tending to the accomplishment  
of a Gentleman: Since the present  
Wars between the Confederates and  
French, he went over, attending a  
Person of Quality into the Campaign,  
and at the Battel of Seniffe, gave Sig-  
nal proofs of his Courage; Where his  
Patron Unfortunately happening to  
be Kill'd, the whole Care and Ma-  
nagement of his Stately Funeral was  
left to him, who dispatcht the same  
with so much Decency, Gallantry,  
and Fidelity, as much Indear'd him to  
the Deceased Gentlemans Relations:  
Amongst whom he has past most of  
his time since in the North in very  
good Repute; Till coming up to Lon-

*Seniffe in  
Alsacia,  
an. 1675*

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don (the great Randevous of Business) as a Candidate of Fortune, in Expectation of some Imploy : He suddenly and most unexpectedly met with that Sad and Disasterous Fate; which put a Period to his Life.

The wicked Instrument that drew this Mischiefe upon him, was one *Parsons*, a fellow of a Debauched Life and Ill Fame; who having heretofore insinuated into the Affections of one *Mr. Wade*, living in the County of *Essex*, and not above Four Miles from the Town of *Bishops-Sturford*, A Gentleman of considerable Quality, and Captain of the Train-bands: He was pleased commonly to entertain him at His House, assist him upon any Occasions, and in a word had conferred many singular Obligations from time to time upon him: But in *July* last a Difference suddenly arising between them upon  
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Some small Occasion, which is differently Related, and nothing Necessary to be known : High Words past on either side , so long till Captain *Wade* call'd him Thief or High-way-Man ; And he in return gave the Captain the Lye , who was thereupon so far provoked as ('tis said not without some blows) to turn him out of his company : Thus away goes *Parsons* in a Huff , meditating Revenge , and coming up to *London* , concealing the Quarrel , Trepan's Mr. *Boteler* down to *Bishops-Starfford* , and at length tells him the difference , that he was resolv'd to have satisfaction , withal requesting him to be his Second : which *Boteler* (also declared at his Death) absolutely refuses, but is at last unhappily persuaded to go to Captain *Wade* , (whom he had often seen in *London* , but had never been at his

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his House) and tell him how enraged *Parsons* was; and that he staid then in such a Meadow; But withal offering his Mediation to reconcile them; But after a little way they parted.

*Boteler* declared further, that he parted with *Captain Wade* before the Murther was committed, and saw him not afterwards; but endeavour'd all he could to avoid his Company; We shall referr the more particular Relation of circumstances to Master *Boteler's* Solemn confession, taken after his condemnation by the High Sheriffs Chaplain, according to the Honourable Judges order, which he twice took the Sacrament upon, and Dyed in; the true copy whereof shall herein in it's due place be inserted.

What is here inserted out of a tenderneſſe to the memory of a true Penitent, is not intended as any sort  
of



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of Reflection upon the Honorable  
Bench, the Witnesses, or the Jury;  
he himself at his Execution acknow-  
ledging the Sentence to have been  
just and legal: but however having  
satisfied Publique Justice in suffer-  
ing according to the Law, and hav-  
ing also freely submitted both to the  
Sentence, and to the Punishment, it  
is lookt upon as an Act of christian  
charity, to divide as far as the case  
will bear it, his crime from his Mis-  
fortune. The Evidences themselves  
agreeing with a great part of what  
he himself delivered, and not con-  
tradicting any part of the rest: But  
however so it was, that upon *Thursday*  
the 26th. of July, he was arraigned  
at *Chelmsford Assizes*; Whereupon  
hearing of the Evidences, he was  
brought in Guilty. He behaved himself at his Tryal  
with a very becoming modesty, pro-  
testing

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testing his Innocency as to being present when they fought, or that he saw a Sword drawn between them: but for further discovery of the Truth, the Ministers attending him, were commanded to press him to a full and candid confession of all circumstances: which he freely consented to, as follows.

The Confession of Mr. Boteler, after his Condemnation, taken from him by the Chaplain to the High Sheriff, according to the Honourable Judges order.

**U**PON a strict and serious examination of the Prisoner condemned, he humbly confessed as follows, Viz. That Parsons came to his lodging in London on the Saturday morning (July 14.) and beginning to renew the former acquaintance betwixt them, (Mr. Boteler having for a long time declined his company by reason of his

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his being reported a common Robber on the Highway) desired of him, that he would accompany him to Mrs. Ainsworths at Bishops-Starrford, where they would be merry, and take the Country air; which Mr. Boteler refused, assuring him that he was going into a course of physick for his health, and therefore not willing to leave the town; However upon Parsons's importunity, at last consented, and as they rode together (not before) he told Mr. Boteler, that Captain Wade, and himself had lately quarreled, and that the Captain had call'd him Thief, and given him such Opprobrious Language, that he could not put it up, but resolv'd to have satisfaction of him, and therefore if the Captain would fight with Seconds, desired Mr. Boteler he would do him the kindness to be his Second; but this Mr. Boteler absolutely refused, and told Parsons he would rather endeavour to compose the Difference, and make them friends, which if he could accomplish, it would not repent him of his Journey, but he should be glad of the friendly Office.

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They came to Mistris Ainsworths that night, and there lay, and also Sunday night; on Munday morning Parsons called up one of the Servants early, and ordered him to make ready the Horse he usually rode upon, and also one for Mr. Boteler, telling him he would show him a neighbouring Park, which was very pleasant and worth seeing; whereupon they rode out together; in the way Parsons told Mr. Boteler, it would then be a very fit time to know Captain Wades mind; Mr. Boteler answered, it was most proper for him to go himself, and he would willingly go along with him, for he knew not the way alone; Parsons replied, he was afraid to go to the Captains House, least the Servants should take an advantage of him, who knew very well he had lately quarreled with their Master, but if he would go to the Captains house, he would direct him the way, and wait his return in a field not far distant; Mr. Boteler accordingly went, telling him at his departure that if he did not return in a short time, he should ride back again towards Bishops-



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shops-Starfford, and he would follow him, Mr. Boteler came to the Captains House, asked for him, and understanding he was at home, alighted from his horse, and was conducted by a Servant into the house, who immediately acquainting his Master, he not long after came down, and treated Mr. Boteler with great kindness and civility, offering him a breakfast, which he refused; but Drank with him, and in their Discourse told him, he was concerned to hear there had been a quarrel betwixt him and Parsons, and that he should think himself happy could he be an instrument to reconcile them: Capt. Wade answered in a passion, that Parsons was a very ungrateful Rogue, that he had affronted him and given him the lye twice, and he would never put it up; Mr. Boteler replied, that if they both continued in such a heat, Parsons demanding satisfaction for the opprobrious language given him, and he resolving on the other side not to pass by the affront offered by Parsons, there was little hopes of a Reconciliation; Captain Wade



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then asked him where Parsons was: Mr. Boteler answered, in a field not far off: then the Captain demanded why he came not himself to his house; he answered, because he feared his servants, or that himself would take advantage of the challenge, Capt. Wade protested he scorned any thing of that Nature, and then enquired of Mr. Boteler, whether parsons had not importun'd him to be his second; he answered he had very earnestly desired it, but he altogether refused him, and therefore desired the Captain he would forgive parsons and be Reconciled: the Captain solemnly protested he would not, but he would go and speak with parsons himself: which Mr. Boteler hearing, was very earnest with him, that in regard he was thus wheedled down by parsons, not knowing any thing of the Difference, and yet might seem concerned in it, that he would put off the meeting of parsons for that Day at least, and then if parsons resolved to fight, he would be a second to the Capt. rather than to parsons; but the Capt. not hearkening  
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thereunto, in a rage took up his sword; and told Mr. Boteler he would walk a little way with him, and so speak with parsons: Mr. boteler desired him to desist, because being both in a heat danger might ensue: however the Capt. went to the Door with Mr. boteler, who called for his horse, and would have immediately got up, but the Capt. told him again he would willingly walk a little way with him, and then Mr. boteler seeing he could not prevail, led his horse in his hand, and so they walked on together; the Capt. asking Mr. boteler in the way, which field he had left parsons in, he pointed to the Field, but desired the Captain to return, which he absolutely refusing, Mr. Boteler told him, if he was resolv'd to go to parsons he would leave him, for he fear'd some mischief would follow; the Capt. replyed, Farewel then honest Will, God blefs thee, and so shook hands and parted: Mr. boteler got on horse-back, and rode on gently towards bishops-stafford, and after he had rode half way, or thereabouts, parsons upon a swift Gallop overtook

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took him, and crying out to him onely, He is fallen, passed by him, and never stop'd till he came to Bishops-Starsford; M. Boteler rode after him, and when he came into Mrs. Ainsworths house, found her crying upon the bed, and Parsons in the Room with his Boots on: No sooner did Mr. Boteler come in, but she cryed out, Oh! Mr. Boteler, what have you done? Parsons hearing that, swore that Mr. Boteler was not near when they fought, and if the Capt. were dead, he onely had kill'd him, and moreover that what he had done, he had done fairly: and having thus said, quitted the Room, call'd for his horse, and rode away: Mr. Boteler after he was gone, thought it convenient for him to stay there, and whilst he was considering what to do in this case, Mrs. Ainsworth and her Servant plainly told him he should not stay there; and bringing the Horse to the door, would not let him be quiet till they had prevailed with him to be gone, not suffering him to stay to take his Coat and his other Perruwig which he left behind. After he had rode four miles, or thereabouts, he saw Parsons standing at a Smiths Shop, whilst his Horse was shoo'd, having drop'd a shoee by the way: and after that riding a little way with Parsons, ask't him the manner of their Duel, who told him, that after they had chose a smooth green place at the end of a Land, they made several passes at one another, and it was his fortune to break the Captains sword, and then catching hold of his  
hand

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hand and wringing it behind him, he ask't whether he would beg his life; the Capt. saying he scorned it, he stab'd him into the breast, and so he fell: after he was fallen he thrust his own sword into the ground, and it breaking, he took the piece broke off, and whirl'd it from him, and so took Horse and rid away. Mr. Boteler hearing this, told Parsons he thought it not safe to keep him company, and desired him to ride on by himself: then said Parsons, prethee Will don't leave me, but let us ride together to London, and assure thy self if thou bee'st questioned, I will quickly clear thee and own the fact; but Mr. Boteler still desired Parsons to ride before, and then he did; and Mr. Boteler kept at some distance from him in hopes to be left behind; but when he came to the Green-Man, Parsons having dropt another shooe, staid there at the Smiths, when Mr. Boteler came by, who seeing him there, took the way over Hackney-Marshes in hopes to loose him, and so they rode into London together; when they came into Drury-Lane, where they set up their horses, Mr. Parsons sent for some women of his acquaintance; and declared to them that he had fought a duel, and that Mr. Boteler was not near the Capt. and himself when they fought, and if Mr. Boteler was call'd in question about it, he wisht that he might be struck blind and dumb, and many other horrid Judgements befall him, if he did not surrender himself and own the fact. Mr. Boteler upon this left him, and went to his own lodging where he commonly  
lay



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lay before; and the next day din'd with his friends at the usual Ordinary, and being admonish'd by a Gentleman that had heard that he was search'd for by the Hue and Cry, sent immediately to secure Parsons: but missing of him, was advised to take another lodging till Parsons was taken: whereupon he went to a friends house, being an Inn in Bloomsbury, and being seiz'd by the Constable and Watch, at the first surprize betwixt sleeping and waking, deny'd his name, but afterwards confessed it, and protested his innocence, submitting to the Officers, and so was brought to Prison.

This Confession he Solemnly made, declaring it to be the whole Truth, as far as he was concerned in, or privy to the Death of Mr. Wade, either before or after the same was committed; and upon this he received the Sacrament. And of the Verity thereof there is this further probability, That he declared the very same to several friends upon his first Apprehension, and all along to his Death continued constant therein, without variation or contradicting himself in any circumstances, even to his Death; Nor was any part thereof disproved by any of the Witnesses, but several particulars confirm'd. Be-



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Being now under a Sentence of Death he began to consider his latter End; and as by the Christian Charity of Authority he was indulged a larger space of time than ordinary to fit himself for that great and dreadful Change, so he improved those precious minutes most frugally to his spiritual advantage, by frequent converse with Ministers, reading the Holy Scriptures, and other pious Books; and lest he should be tempted to mispend any part of his time vainly, or worse, instead of redeeming that which was past, which was now become his great business, as well as interest, he was very cautious of being spoken withal by any without first knowing their names; so that if any of his old profane idle Acquaintance came, he put off their impertinent Visits by

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sending word of his being retired, and busie ; but with the Ministers and others, whose discourse savoured of Heavenly things, and tended to the edification of his Soul ; he declared himself much delighted and refreshed in their society, yielding up himself to follow to his power all their wholesome directions : He was now much given to meditation and private Prayer, mightily bewailing the wickedness of his past life, and magnifying God that had made him sensible of the danger he was formerly in : In a word, There appeared a perfect re-  
al change, and that the Reader may judge how happy a frame of spirit he was under, let him peruse the following Engagement or Covenant, drawn up by *Mr. Boteler* himself, soon after his condemnation, and  
found

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found in his own Hand-writing in his Book: The Original remaining in the hands of a worthy Minister, Chaplain to a Noble Lord, whence this is faithfully copied.

Mr. Boteler's solemn Covenant with God, privately drawn up by himself, and found in his own Manuscript.

**O** H ! most dreadful God for the Passion of thy Son, I beseech thee, accept of thy poor Prodigal, now prostrating himself at thy door ; I have fallen from thee by mine Iniquities, and am by Nature the Son of Death, and a thousand-fold more the Child of Hell by my wicked practices ; but of thine infinite Grace, thou hast promised Mercy to me in Christ, if I will turn to thee with all my Heart : Therefore upon the Call of thy Gospel I am now come in, and throwing  
C 2 down

### *Bateley's Case.*

down my Weapons, submit my self to thy Mercy: And because thou requirest, as the conditions of my peace with Thee, that I should put away my Idols, and be at defiance with all thine Enemies, whom I acknowledge I have wickedly sided with against thee; I do here from the bottom of my heart renounce them all, firmly covenanting with thee, not to allow my self in any known sin, but conscientiously to use all means that I know thou hast prescribed for the death and utter destruction of all my Corruptions: And whereas I have formerly inordinately and Idolatrously let out all my Affections upon the World, I do here resign my heart to thee that madest it, humbly protesting before thy glorious Majesty, that this is the firm resolution of my heart, and that I do unfeignedly desire Grace from thee, That when thou shalt call me thereunto, I may practise this my Resolution, through thy Assistance, to forsake all that is dear unto me in this World, rather than to turn from thee to the ways of sin; and that I may watch against all its Temptations, whether of Prosperity or Adversity, lest they should withdraw my heart from thee;

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thee; Beseeching thee also to help me against the Temptations of Satan, to whose wicked suggestions I resolve by thy Grace never to yield my self a servant; and because my own Righteousness is but as filthy rags, I renounce all confidence therein, and acknowledge that I am of my self a hopeless, helpless, undone Creature, without righteousness or strength.

And for as much as Thou hast of thy bottomless Mercy offered most graciously to me, wretched sinner, to be again through Christ my God, if I would accept of Thee; I call Heaven and Earth to record this day, That I do here solemnly avouch Thee for the Lord my God, and with all possible veneration, bowing the neck of my Soul under the feet of thy Sacred Majesty, I do here take thee the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost for my Portion and chief Good, and do give up my self, Body and Soul for thy servant, promising and vowing to serve thee in Holiness and Righteousness all the days of my life; and since thou hast the Lord Jesus Christ the only means of coming unto thee, I do here upon the bended knees of my Soul accept of him as the only new and living



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ving way, by which sinners may have access to thee, and do here solemnly joyn my self in Marriage-covenant to him.

Oh I blessed Jesus! I come to thee hungry and hard belted, poor and wretched, miserable, blind, and naked, a most loathsome polluted wretch, a guilty condemned Malefactor, unworthy for ever to wash the feet of the Servants of my Lord, much more to be married to the King of Glory; but since such is thine unparallel'd love, I do here with all my power accept thee, and do take thee for my Lord and Husband, for all times and conditions, to love, honour, and obey thee before all others, and this to death; I embrace thee in all thy Offices, I do renounce my own worthiness, and do here own thee to be the Lord my Righteousness; I renounce my own wisdom, and do here take thee for my only Guide; I renounce my own Will, and take thy Will for my Law.

And since thou hast told me I must suffer if I will reign; I do here covenant to take my Lot as it falls with thee, and by thy Grace assisting to run all hazards with thee, verily confiding, That neither life nor death shall part between thee and me.

And

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And because thou hast been pleased to give me thy holy Laws as Rules of my Life, and the ways in which I should walk to thy Kingdom, I do here willingly put my neck under thy Yoke, and set my shoulder to thy Burthen, and subscribing to all thy Laws as holy, just, and good; I solemnly take them as the Rule of Words, Thoughts and Actions, promising, that though my flesh contradict and Rebel, yet I will endeavour to order and govern my whole life according to thy Directions, and will not allow my self in the neglect of any thing that I know to be my duty.

Only because through the frailty of my flesh, I am subject to many failings, I am bold humbly to protest that unallowed miscarriages, contrary to the settled bent and resolution of my heart, shall not make void this Covenant, for so thou hast said.

Now Almighty Searcher of all hearts, thou knowest that I make this Covenant with thee this day, without any known Guile or Reservation, beseeching thee, that if thou espyest any flaw or falshood therein, thou wouldst discover it to me, and help me to do it aright.

And

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And now Glory be to thee, O God the Father, (whom I shall be bold from this day forwards to look upon as my God and Father) that ever thou shouldst find out such a way for the Recovery of undone Sinners; Glory be to thee O God the Son, who hast loved me, and washed me from my Sins with thine own blood, and art now become my Saviour and Redeemer; Glory be to thee O God the Holy Ghost who by the finger of thy Almighty Power hast turned about my heart from Sin to God; O dreadful Jehovah, the Lord Omnipotent, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Thou art now become my Covenant-Friend, *Amen*, So be it, And the Covenant which I have made on Earth, let it be Ratified in Heaven.

*Will. Boteler.*

**H**AVING thus by sincere Repentance, a lively Faith, and hearty Endeavors to work out his salvation *with fear and trembling*; secured his Eternal interests, his Affections were wholly set on things above, so as to be little solicitous for, or about his Temporal concerns; for though  
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Several of his Friends did strenuously endeavour to obtain a Pardon, (or at least further Reprieve) yet he appeared freely willing to pay the forfeiture of his Life, often sighing out his *Cupis dissolvi*, and expressing a Godly jealousy over his own Heart, lest it should start back again to Vanity: But at last the fatal day is prefixed for his Execution, viz. *Monday* the 10th. of *September*, the news whereof he received from Mr. *High-Sheriff* (to whom for his many civilities he gratefully expressed his Acknowledgments) with an unmoved Christian-courage, as tidings he had long expected, serving only to waite him out of the raging Straights of a sinful world into an Ocean of Beatitude; so that having the day before devoutly again received the Sacrament, and care being taken to have his Funeral Sermon Preached before him alive on the morning of his Execution; he was about 10 a Clock conveyed to the Church, where a numerous Congregation being assembled, the Minister before designed, and for whom Mr. Boteler himself had chosen the 7th. of *Micah* and the 8th. verse for his Text on this occasion,

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occasion, being disabled by unexpected indisposition, another able Divine supply'd the place, and after an excellent practical Discourse from a very suitable Scripture, viz. Revel. 2. 16. the former part of the Verse, Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly. Towards the close, applyed himself to the particular solemnity in these words following.

The latter part of the Sermon Preached at Mr. Boteler's Execution.

I Have now done with my Text, and must intreat your Patience and attention, whilst I apply my self to this most unfortunate person before you, which is the sole Occasion of this most sad and sorrowful solemnity: A person whom God hath thought fit to come upon, and surprise by a most dreadful visitation, a death whose very ignominious Pomp and base formalities are most terrible and affrighting, so feeble, unconstant and flaring Nature; and yet I have very great inducements to believe, that his natural courage, and Christian Fortitude, will make him both willing and able to drink of this bitter Cup, which he acknowledges to be much sweetned by some circumstances in the

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mixture and preparation thereof. I must confess according to the Common Law of England, he hath had a very just sentence pass upon him, and he hath often, with Tears in his eyes, and groans in his expressions, bewail'd all the unlucky circumstances of that fatal concern, and hath also (in sincerity I hope) implor'd the Almightyes pardon and forgiveness for associating himself with that most ungrateful Villain, who so barbarously Murdered his too kind, and over-obliging Friend, and notwithstanding his solemn and frequent protestations to the contrary, suffers this miserable Gentleman to pay the price of that blood, the guilt of which still blushes in the conceal'd murderers face, as being the true Reflections of his accusing and convicted Conscience, all which doth really demonstrate the over-whelming pressures of that heart, which could not but conscionably burst forth into a vocal confession of its own Guilt.

However, through good Report and bad Report, the Condemned is now hasting to his Execution, and having received the Holy Sacrament as his strengthening and Spiritual Viaticum, is now in hopes through the conduct and security of his Blessed Saviours merits, to be brought through this Red Sea of Blood, into

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the most Glorious and satisfying Band of Promise; he knows indeed it is a bitter Pass-over, and must be eaten with sower herbs, but still desires to remember it is the Lord's Pass-over, and therefore hopes he shall not think of the herbs, nor be angry with the hands that gathered them, but rather look up to him only in whose power it is to institute that, and also to govern these, being assur'd that all misfortunes upon Earth, are permitted by him who is supream in Heaven, and that all these little and inconsiderable motions in Nature, are mov'd and guided by the great and irresistible wheel of Providence.

I cannot but acknowledge myself plac'd here as the faint Echo of this Dying person, and therefore tis but fit I repeat that, which he desired might be part of his last words, and the subject of my present discourse, had I had a convenient time allotted for a matter of so great weight and importance. Hear then (I beseech you) hear this Dying Penitent, breaking forth into the Pathetical words of the Church, spoken by the Prophet, Mic. 7. 8. 9. 10. Rejoyce not against me, O mine Enemy, when I fall, I shall arise, when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a Light unto me; my shameful fall will be my glorious rise,

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rile, this little darkness upon nature, and shadow of death, I am now about to pass through, will be but an happy entrance and passage into everlasting Light and Brightness; Now in full assurance of this, give me Sir, leave to exhort you, who are now going to Suffer, to persevere and continue stedfast to the end, and to be constant to the last gaspe, in your devout and pious resolutions, that you would bear with patience the indignation of the Lord, consider the rod and who hath appointed it. Let me prevail with you heartily and sincerely to forgive that Enemy, leaving that vindication of your self to that great God to whom vengeance belongeth, you may resolve to Dy in that Christian Charity, which must compleat your sincere and acceptable Repentance. To conclude, let me further Exhort you, seriously to consider, that you are passing from the Church to the last Scene of your fatal Tragedy, and therefore in the midst of every preparative and Religious Exercise, let the thoughts of Dying at the next instant, heighten your zeal and vigor, quicken your graces and vertues, and highly inflame your Devotion: Marriuers who foresee a storm or tempest ready to encounter them, begin then to use their utmost Art and Diligence

### Boteler's Case.

geance to secure themselves, and cry loud to their God: for assistance, as they did in the Ship that carried Jonas. And thus whilst you with seriousness, contemplate on your sudden and succeeding Execution, whilst you are offering up your last Prayers, you cannot but be earnest wish God to save you from perishing, you cannot but cry mightily, and beg heartily that you may take hold on that secure plank, your Saviour's Cross, which may carry you to your desired Haven, that you may be thrown upon Christ, the Rock of your salvation, & so escape eternal Shipwrack; that you may be hid in the clefts of his wounds, till your Heavenly Father's wrath is gone & passed over: the very meditation of that ignominious Death which your God thought fit you should at this time suffer, (considering also what your Saviour hath suffered before you) ought to enliven your Faith, strengthen your Patience, inflame your Love, confirm your hope, & will then carry you out of a pleasing contemplation into a perfect enjoyment of the blessed vision, into that impassible state of eternal joy & felicity, where there shall be no more doubts, nor fears, no more troubles nor distractions, no more sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, To which God of his infinite mercy, &c.

From

*Boteler's Case,*

From the Church the Prisoner  
walkt on foot to the usual place of  
Execution, marching to meet the  
King of Terrors, with the courage  
of a *Roman* shall I say? nay rather  
the Fortitude of a Christian: For  
indeed he only can look death in  
the face undauntedly, upon solid  
grounds, who knows that his Redeem-  
er liveth, without this the Flower  
of Nature shrinks and droops at  
the sight of a chilly Grave: For  
when others brave it, their uncon-  
cernedness is the effect only of stu-  
pidity, or a feaverish Passion; let  
them but consider it in cool blood,  
and they shall be ready with the  
Emperour *Adrian* in a fit of trem-  
bling and perplexity to cry out:

*O Animula vagula, blandula  
Hosper; Comesque Corporis  
Qua nunc abis in Loca  
Pallidula; rigida, nudula,  
Nec, ut soles, dabis jocos.*



*Boteler's Case.*

On the contrary, here you might behold a staid and even Resolution, equally void of womanish fear, or ~~He~~ only impudence, that shew'd a due consideration of the weighty Errand he was going about; & that upon true measures he could bear with the difficulties of the way but of a serene and comfortable prospect of his Journeys end: And now too might you see the most marble-hearted Spectators in all the numerous croud to melt at their Eyes, and compassion to seize the most obdurate breasts.

Being arriv'd at the place, where he was to suffer; he mounted two or three rounds of the Ladder, and thence with a modest look, and chearful voice speaks as follows.

*The*

## Boteler's Case.

### The last Confession, or Speech of Mr. Boteler at place of Execu- tion.

Gentlemen :

**I** Have very great reason to believe, that I shall die here with as little pity, and as much malice as ever any did; but I beg of you to hear the words of a dying man, who within a few minutes must go out of this World.

In the first place, as to the thing I suffer for, I am very well satisfied, and am content to die, believing that I die justly and rightously by the Law of the Land; but as touching the murder of Mr. Wade, I am not guilty; Parsons came to me, and desired me to go to Mr. Wade, to tell him that he was in such a place, and would speak with him, which I was loath for to do; but upon his persuasions I went to him. (This Captain Wade I never had any malice or envy in my heart against in my life, nor any provocation from him) But, as I said, I went to him, and told him that Parsons was resolved not to put up the affront he had given him: I told him also that Parsons was in a Field in such a place: I said, Sir, I am sorry that Parsons hath any thing against you, that he is so enraged; He desired me to go with him to the Field, and shew him where Parsons was, for he would go to him: But I was unwilling to go with him, and

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more

## Boteler's Case.

more than once desired him to let me be gone, that I might not be concern'd one way or other, desiring him likewise to forbear, or at least defer meeting, to see if a reconciliation might not be had, and if afterwards Parsons would fight with Seconds, I would serve him rather than Parsons: But he would needs have me go forth of his House with him; so I walk'd with him a little way, and then I said, Fare ye well, Sir, God bless you. And he said, God bless thee, honest Will, and so we parted.

I do declare that I never saw them near one another, nor any Sword drawn.

If any thing lies upon my Conscience, it is this, (and I have laid it before the Lord with humility, and am satisfied that God hath pardon'd it through the Merits of Christ) That I should be an occasion to bring him out of his house, whereby he came to his end.

I do declare, That Parsons told me both before and when he was come to London, that he did believe the Captain was not dead.

But I have very justly deserved a greater death than this, by my many sins that I have committed against God, and I do desire that my fall may be to the saving of many a man here.

My wickedness was great, I was come to mean Atheisme, I did not believe there was a God, but liv'd in continual practice of sin; going to bed prophaning of his holy Name, and rising again with curses in my mouth, let all that hear me this day repent, and not forget the Lord that made them.

## Boteler's Case.

I was educated like a Gentleman (as many do know), and very well brought up as to Religion, but I had left all that, and kept bad company, and was drawn in only as you have heard, but you see, he that did the fault is escaped, and I must dye.

Now I desire that every one that lives, and sees me here, may take example by me, who am going out of this world within a few minutes; there is never a one here, but does provoke the Almighty every minute to cut him off; were not his mercies infinite; and I can freely lose this life, confessing I have deserved an eternal death, yet I believe through the merits of my dear Saviour that he will receive me immediately into glory.

Now there is another aspersion that is cast upon me, that I was a High-way Robber, and I do declare, that I never had any such design, never was of any gang to that purpose, nor ever saw any man robb'd that I remember in all my life.

As touching the bloody coat that people judge I did the Act in, I do declare that it was done by my being let blood, and that six or seven weeks before the murder was committed, as many Gentlemen can witness, nor had I that coat on then.

Another thing I would clear, that was cast upon me, which is, that I was a Roman Catholick, But I do declare that I am not, but am a Protestant and of the Church of England, though one of the least and worst thereof.

Now I have done, and leave it to you, whether you will beleive the words of a dying man or no; for how could I expect to be saved, if I should go

## Boteler's Case.

out of the world with a lye in my mouth.

I pray God of Heaven freely to forgive Parsons, that hath brought me to this, and to give him to consider what he hath done, and grant him repentance for it, and to have mercy on his soul.

But though I dye I am confident that he will clear my innocency, but I find that I was so little believed, that people thought I would say any thing to save my life.

And now I desire you all to joyn with me in Prayer to Almighty God to forgive me my sins, to have mercy upon me, and to save my soul.

So he kneeled down to Prayer, and prayed very affectionately, humbly, and enlargedly, with much brokenness of heart, and such patheticall expressions, that, being not exactly taken, it would be injurious to represent them with the least variation from his own words; then a Minister went to Prayer with him, and after he had prayed to God again in few words, he then rise up and said, *The God of Heaven bleſs you all*, and when he was on the Ladder, he said, *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt have mercy on me*, then the Hangman asking him to forgive him, he answered, *Oh with all my Soul I forgive thee*; and then laſt of all gave the ſignal of his innocency that he promiſed to the Miniſter, by clapping his hands, and ſaid, *Jeſus Chriſt receive my Soul*, and ſo was turned off.

There were preſent a great many perſons of Quality; and a vaſt number of common people, but ſo affecting



### *Boteler's Case.*

affecting was his language and behaviour; extorting tears from his very Enemies, so that scarce any there but wept, and bewail'd his untimely end; as if he had been one of their own Relations: His body in a fair Coffin was convey'd back to *Chelmsford*, and that evening decently buried, being attended to the Church with a very numerous company.

Considering the original occasion of all this sad Tragedy, wherein these two Gentlemen so unfortunately lost their lives, one in the field by the sword of an ungrateful villain, and the other by the hand of Justice; I know not how I can more usefully close this Narrative, than with a few words against the mischievous humour of Duels, tis most strange how such an unreasonable, brutish and bloody custome should so far prevail against the Laws, as still to be accounted brave and Honourable, as if a Gentleman were obliged to hazard his life, or forfeit his Honour at the pleasure of every desperate Ruffin; that Honor is too thin and brittle; that a foolish rash word can pierce; tis certainly a dear purchas'd Conquest, that stains a man with the deserved title of a Murderer, a sorry triumph where the Conqueror must either run away and hide his head, or ignominiously fall a sacrifice to expiate the guilt of his victory; does not he who denies that he can be wrong'd more nobly, then he who confesses that he is both subject to wrongs, and hath received so great an one that he cannot but pursue its revenge. he who conceals his wrong, is only wrong'd in private, whilst

## Butler's Case.

whilst he who revenges his wrong, is wrong'd in publique, and certainly the publike wrong is more ignoble; and seeing we conceive our selves concern'd in honour to punish such as would divulge an affront that was smother'd as soon as given, we cannot but be said to wrong our own Honour, when we in seeking revenge, proclaim such wrongs as had else either vanisht, or been lessen'd by the concealment. Thus have I heard of a prudent old man, at whose bald head a rotten Orange being thrown, in the street, clapt his hat upon't, and said, *I shall spoil that knaves sport; who expected to see me come shewing my head all besmear'd over, and complaining of the injury.* 'Tis one of the most picquant revenges to undervalue our Enemies, so far as not to think them worthy of our notice; and we shew our selves to be greater then they, when we let the world see, that they cannot trouble us, when children and natural fools, or mad men do the same things that we fret at in others of more advanced years, and understanding, we pass them without a frown; which shews, that it is not the acts done us by our enemies, but our own resentment, which in effect injures us; he who pardons, proclaims he fears not his Enemies for the future, but revenge implies apprehensions of what we desire on that account to lessen; thus cowards are generally cruel, never counting themselves secure till their Enemies have lost all capacity to resist: in revenge we act the Executioner, but we personate a Prince when we pardon, in the one we bestow a favour, and so are noble,

## *Boteles Case.*

noble, in the other we discover our infirmity. May such considerations or (if reason cannot be heard) at least such direful examples, as this we have here impartially presented the world with prevail, for the future to abate this wicked custom, grounded on fantastick punctilio's of Honour, generally promoted on trifling, shameful occasions, always attended with black and fatal consequences, and chiefly practised by those that may justly claim the least share in the noble virtues of real Magnanimity and Fortitude.

*Pascitur in vivis livor, post fata quiescit.*

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**FINIS.**